

the casualty reduction targets and the road safety initiatives detailed in the Moscow Declaration are accomplished, both at home and abroad.

# PERSONAL EXPLANATION

## HON. TIMOTHY V. JOHNSON

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, December 8, 2009*

Mr. JOHNSON of Illinois. Madam Speaker, unfortunately earlier today I was unable to cast my votes on H.R. 3288, H. Con. Res. 199, H. Con. Res. 206, and H. Res. 940 and wish the record to reflect my intentions had I been able to vote.

Last night, as you are aware, there were no votes in the House of Representatives due to the White House Christmas Party. I took this opportunity to meet with some of my young constituents at the Farmhouse Fraternity on the campus of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign to discuss agricultural issues and the implementation of the Farm Bill. Early this morning I boarded an airplane in Champaign, Illinois, and unfortunately due to weather, my plane was drastically delayed, I was unable to arrive in Washington, DC to cast my votes.

Had I been present on rollcall #931 on the Motion to Instruct Conferees on H.R. 3288, Making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, HUD, and related agencies for FY 2010, I would have voted "aye". This vote would have blocked any attempt by the Majority from using H.R. 3288 as the vehicle for an Omnibus Appropriations bill and require that the language for this bill be posted online for 72 hours prior to any vote. Madam Speaker, omnibus appropriations bills that are hundreds of pages long and have not been fully vetted is no way to fund our government and I urge you to refrain from using this bill for those purposes.

Had I been present on rollcall #932 on suspending the rules and passing H. Con. Res. 199, Recognizing the 10th Anniversary of the activation of Echo Company of the 100th Battalion of the 442d Infantry, and the sacrifice of the soldiers and families in support of the United States, I would have voted "aye."

Had I been present on rollcall #933 on suspending the rules and passing H. Con. Res. 206, Commending the soldiers and civilian personnel stationed at Fort Gordon and their families for their service and dedication to the United States and recognizing the contributions of Fort Gordon to Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom and its role as a pivotal communications training installation, I would have voted "aye."

Had I been present on rollcall #934 on suspending the rules and passing H. Res. 940, Recognizing and honoring the National Guard on the occasion of its 373rd anniversary, I would have voted "aye."

CONGRESS IS TAKING THE WRONG APPROACH ON ESTATE TAX REFORM

## HON. JERRY MORAN

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, December 8, 2009*

Mr. MORAN of Kansas. Madam Speaker, farmers, ranchers, and other small businesses are the backbone of the Kansas economy. The ability to pass a business from one generation to the next is critical to a business's ongoing success. Rural America has enough trouble retaining a youthful workforce. The estate or "death" tax does not aid our efforts in promoting long term growth and curbing depopulation.

A major obstacle to the continuity of a business is the estate tax. I have long sought a permanent repeal of the estate tax. This tax comprises less than one percent of U.S. revenues, but poses a substantial impediment to the growth of family farms and small businesses. H.R. 4154, Permanent Estate Tax Relief for Families, Farmers, and Small Businesses Act of 2009, does not provide the necessary reforms. While the certainty provided by H.R. 4154 would be welcome, passage of this legislation reduced the chances to next to none that any significant changes will occur to estate taxes in the future. I have sponsored an alternative that, for a while, was expected to be brought to the House floor. While it does not do all that I would like; it is reasonable and continues to have the chance for broad bipartisan support.

While I will continue to look for ways to achieve a full repeal, I believe the next best alternative, given today's political and economic climate, is H.R. 3905, the Estate Tax Relief Act of 2009. H.R. 3905 will exempt, from the estate tax, estates worth \$3.5 million in 2009, increase the exemption to \$5 million by the year 2019, and index the exemption to inflation to allow it to automatically increase in the years following 2019. Enacting exemptions at these levels should prevent a majority of Kansas' small businesses from being affected by the tax. H.R. 3905 will also reduce the maximum tax rate, for estates in excess of the exemption, to 35 percent by the year 2019.

While I am encouraged to see the House's willingness to address this issue, I feel Congress has missed an opportunity. I could not support H.R. 4154 because I believe it did not sufficiently address the damaging consequences of the estate tax while limiting the chances that Congress will ultimately do so. It is apparent that the House is currently unwilling to consider a full repeal. Until Congress is ready for that discussion, I will continue to work for initiatives that alleviate financial pressure from our farmers, ranchers, and small business owners.

# OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL DEBT

## HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, December 8, 2009*

Mr. COFFMAN of Colorado. Madam Speaker, today our national debt is \$12,086,172,114,368.23.

On January 6th, 2009, the start of the 111th Congress, the national debt was \$10,638,425,746,293.80.

That means the national debt has increased by \$1,447,746,368,074.43 so far this year.

According to the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office, the forecast deficit for this year is \$1.6 trillion. That means that so far this year, we borrowed and spent an average \$4.4 billion a day more than we have collected, passing that debt and its interest payments to our children and all future Americans.

# SATELLITE HOME VIEWER REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2009

SPEECH OF

## HON. FRANK KRATOVIL, JR.

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, December 2, 2009*

Mr. KRATOVIL. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 3570, the Satellite Home Viewer Update and Reauthorization Act of 2009. This legislation reauthorizes the satellite compulsory license for carriage of distant network satellite affiliate TV station signals. If this bill does not become law before the end of the year, the distant network carriage license will expire and satellite subscribers would be left in the dark.

While I support the underlying legislation, I would like to draw attention to a provision that I believe could undermine our efforts to ensure rural residents have access to local programming. By redefining an "unserved household" to include those served by multicast networks, this legislation allows satellite broadcasters to continue to import distant, out-of-market signals into short markets when they are no longer necessary. I request that a letter signed by 18 bipartisan Members of the House of Representatives expressing concern over this definition of "unserved household," be inserted as an extraneous material.

WASHINGTON, DC,  
*December 2, 2009.*

Hon. JOHN CONYERS, JR.,  
*Chairman, Committee on the Judiciary, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.*

Hon. LAMAR SMITH,  
*Ranking Member, Committee on the Judiciary, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.*

DEAR CHAIRMAN CONYERS AND RANKING MEMBER SMITH: We write today to express our concerns regarding the manner in which H.R. 3570, the Satellite Home Viewer Update and Reauthorization Act of 2009, would diminish the availability of local programming available to satellite television subscribers.

Digital multicasting enables broadcasters to provide TV viewers with expanded options for free, local TV programming beyond the primary network affiliate channel. In pursuit of this promise, many broadcasters have already begun multicasting dedicated sports, ethnic, minority, weather, news, and hyper-local channels.

In various markets, including "short markets," i.e., television markets lacking a full complement of network affiliates, some stations have begun multicasting a local network affiliate other than the network affiliate carried on their primary channel. For example, television viewers in the Beaumont, TX market, which lacked a local NBC station, can now watch local NBC affiliate K-JAC as a multicast channel provided by a station that broadcasts the ABC affiliate